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## NOTES AND REVIEWS.

## CRIMINAL STATISTICS.

In an address on American Criminology delivered before the International Penological Society of the German Empire, some months ago, Professor Dr. B. Freudenthal, who has made personal investigations in this country, said, among other things: "There are lacking, especially, complete statistics. In the United States there is nothing which approximates our excellent Imperial Criminal Statistics. . . . The deficiency exists in the single States as well as in the Union. . . . The point wherein they [the Americans] fail is in the National and State compilation of statistics."

It is impossible to give anything but regretful assent to this criticism. Professor Freudenthal would have been justified in going further, and characterized as of little value the criminal statistics contained in most reports of penal institutions. He very properly finds some excuse for the lack of national statistics in "the youthfulness of the country and its great extent"; but he is mistaken in attributing it "above all things to the jealousy with which the individual States resent any investigation, not to speak of intrusion of the Union, into their affairs." The jealousy he alludes to does not offer a real obstacle to the collection of competent national American criminal statistics. Of course, if the federal authorities should attempt to prescribe methods of original entry in criminal cases for State courts and State penal institutions, there might be trouble.

No, the fundamental reason why we are without adequate criminal statistics is that we are not sufficiently alive to the need of them. As Dr. William H. Allen remarks in his recent work entitled "Efficient Democracy" (it might have been called "Efficient Statistical Methods"), "Of no great public duty have we asked so few questions, counted, compared, and summarized so little, as with regard to our treatment of the criminal. . . . Statistics of crime mean at present almost nothing."

One need not look to so enlightened a country as Germany for examples of criminal statistics that put us to blush. Nearly every European State can give us lessons in applying the statistical method to matters of crime. At the present time it is possible to get a much more accurate statistical picture of crime conditions in far-away Burma than of such conditions in the United States. Self-evidently,

in a small country or one with a strongly centralized government, a statistical inquiry with regard to crime is not beset with such difficulties as would attend a national investigation of this kind in the United States. It is true also that, as far as individual States are concerned, there is not always at hand the necessary machinery for a thorough investigation. But beyond all this the fact remains that we are without criminal statistics because there is not a sufficiently insistent demand for them. The American people usually finds out what it wants to know about social conditions, provided the facts can be ascertained. The lamentable lack of criminal statistics deserving the name is, therefore, primarily an indication of failure to appreciate their value. This is but another way of saying that we do not care enough to know the truth about crime. In penological theory and practice there is a growing interest which, however, is to a curious degree unaccompanied by a demand for a working basis of facts. Beyond this we are apparently content to discuss such important matters as capital crimes in the light of statistics based on newspaper clippings, and to receive wilcat estimates regarding the cost of crime as final and sufficient evidence for our guidance.

So long as the basic material for the discussion of criminal statistics is lacking, a separate literature on the subject does not develop, and there is little likelihood of independent investigations being undertaken. On the other hand, comprehensive official statistics of crimes not only provide material for much fruitful discussion, but frequently instigate private statistical inquiries of great value.

An interesting example of the extent to which German thinkers concern themselves with criminal statistics is furnished by the two volumes which have appeared of the periodical *Monatsschrift für Kriminalpsychologie und Strafrechtsreform*, edited by Professor Dr. med. Gustav Aschaffenburg, and published at Heidelberg. Although, as the title indicates, not primarily devoted to statistics of crime, it has contained a number of articles on this subject. Brief references are made in the following to the more important of these articles.

*Utilization of Statistics of Crime.*—As the proper material for criminal statistics is considered the totality of facts which the entire apparatus for the treatment of criminals brings to light, in regard to the different apprehensions, trials, and punishments for crime of an individual in the course of his life, including the steps preliminary to trial as well as matters pertaining to evidence and sentence. Among other details the author insists upon inquiring into the economic injury resulting from each criminal offence and the direct or indirect motives underlying it. He also emphasizes the

necessity of a geographical presentation of the extent of the permissible punishments in each case, etc.

*Statistics of Conditional Pardons.*—A discussion of the results of conditional pardons from the inception of this instrument of justice until the end of 1903. "On the basis of the statistical material at hand the conclusion appears justified that this new institution has not disappointed expectations, but fully met them."

*Hereditary Conditions among Criminals.*—A minute statistical investigation with regard to 214 convicts confined in the cantonal prison of Zürich in Regensdorf.

*Criminality in the Different Crown Provinces of Austria and its Relation to Economic and Social Conditions.*—"The Austrian statistics clearly prove that temptations from without, arising from economic distress and social as well as domestic misery, are potent in developing criminal tendencies." The investigation includes a study of wages and the movement of population, the influence of economic conditions upon the various classes of crime, especially offences against property, against the person, and against public morals. The conclusion is that criminality in Austria exhibits great contrasts: "In the western part of the country, . . . where material and educational progress is continuous, the lower and violent forms of crime grow rarer; in the eastern part of the empire, where poverty and ignorance have reached depths which are probably without a parallel in the enlightened countries, crime flourishes unchecked."

*The Prevention of Offences against Public Morals.*—Shows the relation of alcohol to crime, on the basis of statistical data pertaining to the district of Heidelberg.

*Statistics of Labor and their Value in the Treatment of Crime.*—A statement of the material contained in statistics of labor which should be utilized in statistical studies of crime, in order to secure a correct view of the influence of economic conditions.

*The Criminal Statistics of the Netherlands.*—A review for the years 1896 to 1904, with special reference to recidivism.

*Criminal Statistics of Austria, 1900 and 1901.*—A summary of the elaborate criminal statistics of Austria for the years 1897 to 1901.

*The Crime Movement in Austria during the last Thirty Years, and its Relation to Economic Conditions.*—A comprehensive inquiry which takes into view the important economic changes during the last thirty years. The rise in prices of articles of food, and its influence upon conditions of living, the consumption of alcohol, the economic crises, etc., are brought into comparison with fluctuation of the number of offenders considered by the different classes of crime. J. K.